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NSC BRIEFING

27 April 1955

SOUTH VIETNAM

- I. Tension remains high in Saigon as Diem moves to bring Binh Xuyen-controlled national police under his control.
  - A. Government strategy is to establish new headquarters under loyal chief and direct all policemen to report to him.
  - B. This procedure designed to avert charge that government going out of way to make trouble.
    1. Diem claims Bao Dai was given prior notification; merely advised Diem not to cause disorders.

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2. Immediate Binh Xuyen

response to Diem move  
was nonviolent, limited  
to appeal to Bao Dai and  
simultaneous threat to  
"go underground."

3. Currently, Bao Dai  
threatening to "take  
action" momentarily  
regarding general  
situation but sort of  
action undefined, char-  
acterized by spokesman  
as "no more than minimum  
necessary to avoid  
immediate explosion."

C. Government reluctant to force  
issue of physical control of old  
police headquarters, which lo-  
cated in heart of European

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utilities.

D. French believe move may not lead to trouble.

1. They will use "any influence they have" to persuade Binh Xuyen not to resort to arms.
2. Believe Binh Xuyen hopes Diem "fall like ripe fruit, without Binh Xuyen having to shake tree."
3. Existence some anti-Binh Xuyen feeling among police confirmed by US embassy security officer.

II. Government anticipates early rallying of a Viet Minh battalion left over in Camau area, with resultant psychological boost to progovernment cause.

A. Viet Minh battalion chief  
claims 7,000 followers, but  
government thinks more likely  
figure is about 1,000.

III. Diem apparently has no intention of  
relinquishing his premiership without  
a fight.

A. Apparently going forward with  
plans for an elected assembly.